

# Wisconsin Post High School Outcomes Survey for Individuals with Disabilities

## Executive Summary Year 5

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is committed to identifying and responding to the needs of students with disabilities.

To that end, it is necessary to document the post high school outcomes of students with disabilities, and to use that information to make programming and planning decisions to improve education and transition services for students, and to ultimately improve their post high school outcomes.

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August 2005

## WISCONSIN STATEWIDE AND LEA POST HIGH SCHOOL OUTCOMES

The final regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) were intended to improve the post high school outcomes of youth with disabilities by requiring state and local education agencies to develop and implement formal procedures and strategies to address this critical period of transition. The Wisconsin Post High School Outcomes Survey (WPHSOS) provides a framework that both the State Educational Agency (SEA) and Local Education Agencies (LEA) can utilize to conduct outcomes studies, identify critical outcomes and needs, and improve the post high school outcomes of future students.

By collecting the outcomes data of youth with disabilities who have exited high school, the SEA and LEAs have data that can be utilized in the following ways:

- local education agencies (LEA) can conduct a similar outcomes survey to review local outcomes of students who have exited their educational system.
- SEA and LEA surveys can measure desired outcomes by comparing state, local, and national data.
- LEAs can review their high school curriculum, community participation and work experiences offered to students to identify specific areas that need to be addressed to improve the outcomes of students exiting their high school placement.
- LEAs can examine different outcomes specifically related to gender, ethnicity, disability or diploma type to detect areas of weakness in current high school programming that may affect outcomes.
- by examining the IEP transition requirements of IDEA, LEAs can identify specific areas of weakness, implement research-based best-practice transition planning, and demonstrate improved outcomes for exiters.
- LEAs can assess participation in the IEP transition planning process by outside agencies, postsecondary educational training institutes and employment agencies in meeting the transition needs of youth with disabilities.

### SUMMARY OF KEY OUTCOMES FOR 2003-04 EXITERS

#### Independent Living

- ❖ 63% of the respondents continue to live at home with their parents
- ❖ 35% of the respondents live independently
- ❖ 81% of the respondents report getting together socially one or more times per week

#### Postsecondary Education

- ❖ 48% of the respondents participate in postsecondary education
- ❖ 29% of the respondents attend an academic (2-year or 4-year) college
- ❖ 33% of the respondents attend technical college

#### Employment

- ❖ 72% of the respondents are employed
- ❖ 73% of employed youth works more than 20 hours per week
- ❖ 50% of employed youth work more than 37 hours per week
- ❖ 49% of the employed youth earn \$8.00 or more per hour and 44% earn less than \$8.00
- ❖ 61% of employed youth earns between \$5.75 and \$9.99 per hour
- ❖ 22% of employed youth earns more than \$10.00 per hour
- ❖ 29% of the respondents are working and also participating in postsecondary education
- ❖ 16% of the respondents are neither employed nor attending postsecondary education

## SURVEY BACKGROUND

The National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special Education Students (NLTS) was mandated in 1983 by the United States Congress to provide information to practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and others in the special education community regarding the transition of youth with disabilities from high school to early adulthood. The first NLTS (1985 through 1993) included more than 8,000 youth with disabilities from 300 school districts across the nation, representing students in high school special education during the 1985-86 school year. Telephone interviews, surveys of teachers and principals who served them, and analyses of students' school records contributed to a comprehensive look at many aspects of the lives of young people with disabilities. The NLTS was the first study to describe the experiences and outcomes of youth with disabilities nationally during high school and early adulthood. Findings of the NLTS have been widely cited in the literature, and can be reviewed in-depth at <http://www.sri.com> or by contacting the Office of Special Education Programs at 202-205-9864.

The second national study (NLTS2) began in 2001 and is a follow-up to the first NLTS. It involves a nationally representative sample of almost 12,000 students who were 13-16 years old and received special education in December 2000. In 2003, more than 7,000 parents and guardians completed phone interviews. The study will follow these students until 2010. Results of the NLTS-2 can be viewed at <http://www.nlts2.org> as they become available.

In preparation for this survey, an extensive literature review was conducted to examine similar data collection methods in other states and to ensure similarities in survey design with the NLTS and NLTS2.

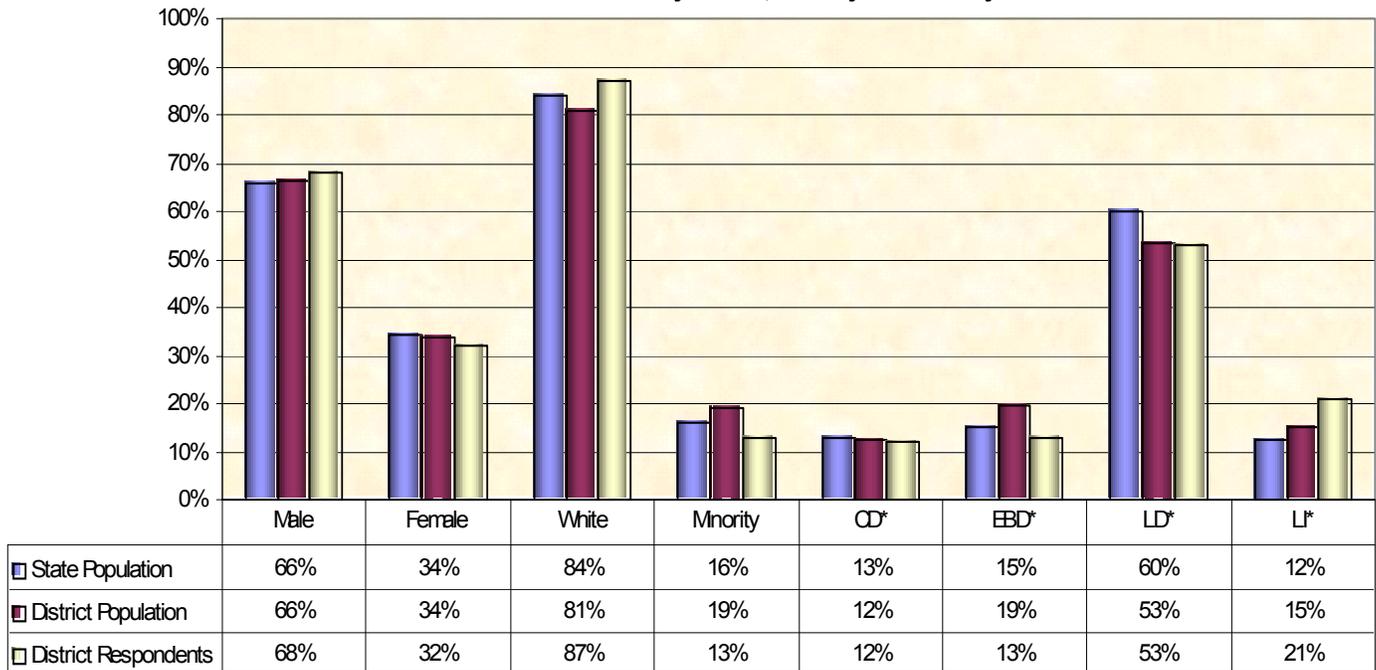
## SURVEY YEARS

<b>Year 1</b> <b>Group 1</b>	St. Norbert College Survey Center interviewed a statewide random sample of 389 students with disabilities who exited high school from LEAs in Wisconsin between December 1999 and December 2000. (7% of state exiters)
<b>Year 2</b> <b>LEA Mini-grants</b>	32 LEAs interviewed 520 students with disabilities who exited high school from LEAs in Wisconsin between December 2000 and December 2001. CESA #11 utilized a data-entry disk and process.
<b>Year 3</b> <b>Group 1 (3)</b> Re-interviewed	St. Norbert College Survey Center re-interviewed 291 (75%) of Group 1 exiters (exited high school between December 1999 and December 2000) out of high school for 3 years.
<b>Group 2</b> Added	St. Norbert College Survey Center interviewed a statewide random sample of 600 students with disabilities who exited high school from LEAs in Wisconsin between December 2001 and December 2002 (10% of state exiters).
<b>Year 4</b> <b>LEA Mini-grants</b>	10 LEAs and Wisconsin State Transition Initiative (WSTI) coordinators interviewed 331 students with disabilities who exited high school between December 2002 and December 2003. Mini-grant participants and WSTI coordinators piloted the outcomes survey process (8% of state exiters).
<b>WSTI Survey</b>	WSTI coordinators implemented the outcomes survey to determine student benefits from participating in the Wisconsin Statewide Transition Initiative.
<b>Year 5</b> <b>Group 1(5)</b> Re-Interviewed 2004-05	St. Norbert College Survey Center re-interviewed Group 1 exiters (exited high school between December 1999 and December 2000) out of high school for 5 years.
<b>Group 2(3)</b> Re-Interviewed	St. Norbert College Survey Center re-interviewed Group 2 exiters (exited high school between December 2001 and December 2002) out of high school for 3 years.
<b>Group 3</b>	Added St. Norbert College Survey Center interviewed a statewide random sample consisting of more than 725 students with disabilities who exited high school from LEAs in Wisconsin between December 2003 and December 2004. Website development and refinement in progress.

## SURVEY RESPONDENTS

For this study, students with disabilities who successfully exited their high school education between December 2003 and December 2004 were included in the population. The following chart shows the comparison of the students with disabilities who exited in the state (State Population), students in the districts eligible to participate in the study (District Population), and those district students who responded to the interview questions (District Respondents). Contact information was obtained on 71% of the 2716 students that were randomly selected to participate in the interview process. Information presented in this report is based on the responses of the District Respondents. For portions of this report, ethnic categories of Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/Not Hispanic, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaskan Native are combined and grouped “Minority”. Similarly, the disability areas of hearing impairment (HI), visually impairment (VI), speech and language impairment (S/L), autism (Autism), deaf/blind (D/B), other health impairment (OHI), orthopedic impairment (OI) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) are combined and grouped as “Low Incidence” (LI).

**Comparison of State Population, District Population and District Respondents by Gender, Ethnicity and Disability**



**State Population n = 7161 | District Population n = 2716 | District Respondents n = 725**

Attempts were made to contact all available former students:  
 725 student telephone interviews were successfully completed. This represents 11% of statewide population of exiters. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 5% at the 99% confidence level.

Of the 103 former students who were unable to respond for themselves:  
 50% were unable to communicate responses  
 9% were unavailable at the time of the interview  
 32% were unable to be located or unavailable  
 10% indicated another reason they could not respond

Of the 725 successfully completed interviews:  
 86% were the former students  
 13% were the parents of the former students  
 1% identified themselves as guardian or other

## INDEPENDENT LIVING

Independent living assesses residential living arrangements and general community participation, including engagement in activities outside the home, residential independence, and participation in social, recreational and civic activities. The ability to live on one’s own is believed to be evidence of the ability of youth to perform many common adult tasks. Nationally, 73% of youth with disabilities live with a parent(s) up to two years after exiting high school (NLTS2, 2003).

### INDEPENDENT LIVING - LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

#### Living Arrangements One Year After Exiting High School

- 63% Continue to live with their parent(s)
- 35% Report living independently, meaning they are living alone, with another family member, with a spouse or roommate, or are in the military

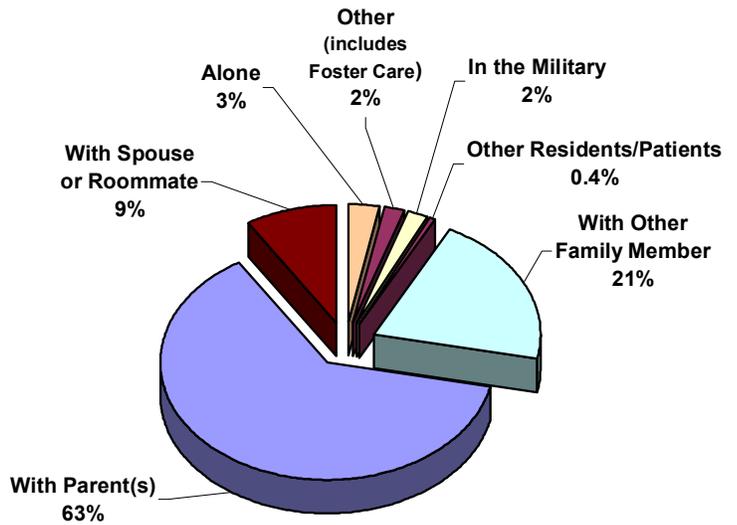
#### Living with Parents One Year After Exiting High School

- 65% Male youth
- 59% Female youth
- 64% White youth
- 58% Minority youth
- 63% Youth with cognitive disabilities
- 55% Youth with emotional behavioral disabilities
- 65% Youth with learning disabilities
- 61% Youth with low incidence disabilities

#### Living Independently One Year after Exiting High School

- 32% Male youth
- 39% Female youth
- 34% White youth
- 39% Minority youth
- 30% Youth with cognitive disabilities
- 34% Youth with learning disabilities
- 37% Youth with low incidence disabilities
- 44% Youth with emotional behavioral disabilities
- 3% Own their own home

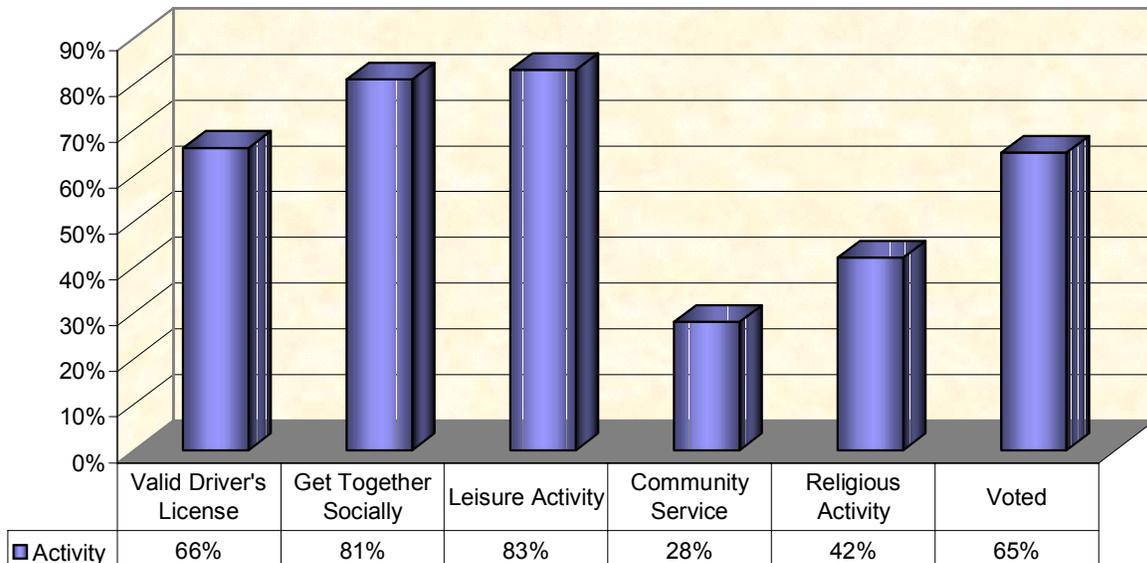
**Living Arrangements (n=725)**



### INDEPENDENT LIVING - SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL

Nationally, 29% of youth regularly participate in community groups and 29% do volunteer work or participate in a community service (NLTS2, 2003).

**Social/Recreational Activities in Past Six Months (n=725)**



## INDEPENDENT LIVING - SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL

### CONTACT WITH ADULT AGENCIES IN HIGH SCHOOL (2002-03 Exiters)

37% of the IEPs developed for the former students' senior year indicated a need for involvement from an outside agency

29% indicated an outside agency was invited to the IEP meeting, of which:

73% indicated the agency attended the student's IEP meeting.

33% of the former students' IEPs contained a statement of interagency responsibility or needed linkages

#### AGENCIES UTILIZED

Division of Vocational  
Rehabilitation (DVR) services  
Job Center  
Human Services

#### AGENCY SERVICES

transportation to work  
workforce resources/job coaching/job  
placement interviews and  
training  
paid postsecondary education tuition  
paid travel (mileage reimbursement)  
for college

### ADULT AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/SUPPORT SERVICES

15% of respondents report utilizing the services of an Independent Living Center or Health and Human Services, such as a one-on-one personal care assistant, counselor or social worker to maintain their independent living arrangement (38% CD, 15% EBD, 7% LD, 19% LI)

25% report they are receiving services from an adult employment agency (e.g. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Human Services) (46% CD, 32% EBD, 18% LD, 30% LI)

### TRANSPORTATION

66% have a valid driver's license

3% have a suspended license

17% do not have a license but planned  
to obtain one

5% do not have a valid license  
and do not plan to obtain one

8% report being medically restricted  
from obtaining a driver's license.

12% indicate getting a ride to a social  
event is a barrier to their  
participation

### RESPONSES BY FORMER STUDENTS ON INDEPENDENT LIVING

Respondents were asked what, if any, problems or barriers they have had in participating in activities such as finding housing, getting together socially with friends, or doing things they enjoy. The following is a sampling of the responses:

- ❖ Lack of having a job and money
- ❖ Don't make enough money
- ❖ Lack of transportation
- ❖ Hard time getting around town when parents are not available
- ❖ Difficulty dealing with money and balancing a checkbook
- ❖ No network of friends
- ❖ Finding people to know
- ❖ Lack of housing for people in wheelchairs/with mental health issues
- ❖ On waiting list for a long time
- ❖ Lack of county funds
- ❖ Unable to obtain medicare

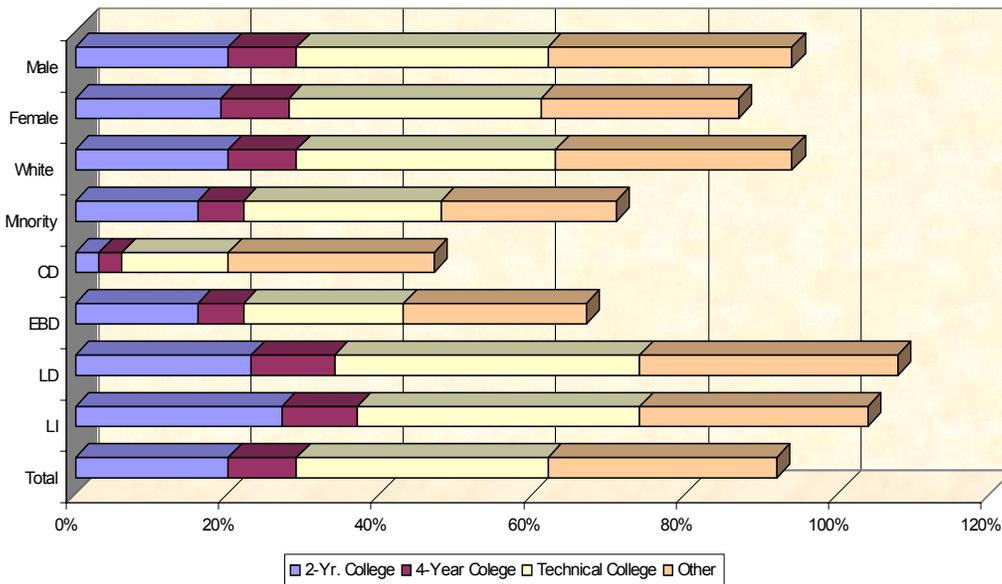
### POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION & TRAINING

Postsecondary education includes any type of formal education program after high school. Former students may be enrolled in a 2-year or 4-year academic college or technical training program. A technical college offers training that leads to specific certification in a field of study. Postsecondary education may also include a formal apprenticeship program or the military. Adult education and job training are not considered formal postsecondary education programs, and generally do not lead to a degree or general employability skill development, but are included in this study as types of postsecondary education or training.

## POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION & TRAINING - PARTICIPATION

48% of former students are attending or have attended some type of postsecondary education programs. 5% (9% nationally) of the former students started a postsecondary program then discontinued. Of the 725 students in the survey, 61% of the former students indicated it was their primary IEP intention to attend postsecondary education or training. Overall, participation in postsecondary education is fairly even in relation to gender. Fewer minority youth (38%) participate than white youth (49%). Youth with cognitive disabilities attend less than is represented in the population of youth with disabilities. Youth with learning disabilities (56%) and youth with low incidence disabilities (56%) represent the greatest majority of students participating in all types of postsecondary education. Many youth participate in more than one type of further education, as indicated by the 669 “yes” responses for the 345 who attend or have attended postsecondary training.

**Participation in Postsecondary Education (n=725)**



33% Attend a Vocational college  
 9% Attend a 4-year college  
 20% Attend a 2-year college

*NLTS2 (2003) data indicate that among youth with disabilities out of high school up to 2 years, 22% enrolled in academic programs and 6% enrolled in technical programs. Nationally, 32% of those who complete high school are enrolled in postsecondary education compared to 73% of the general student population.*

## POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING - SELF-ADVOCACY AND DISCLOSURE

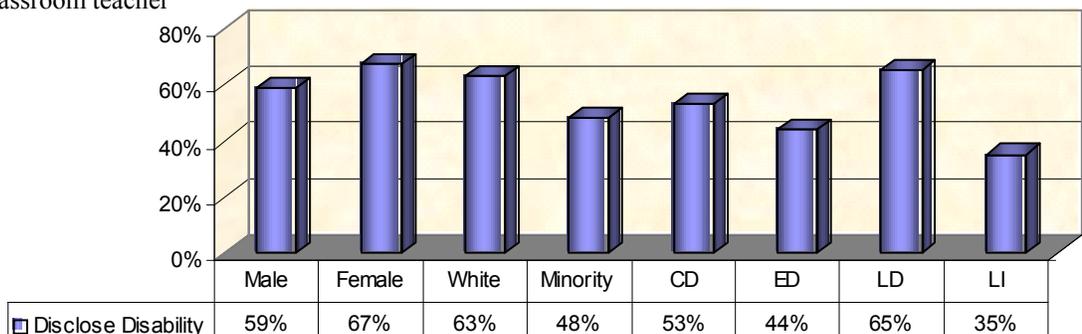
Self-determination is defined as acting as the primary causal agent in one’s life and making choices and decisions regarding one’s quality of life free from undue external influence or interference. Disclosing one’s disability status to those who can provide needed accommodations is an activity of self-advocacy.

Regardless of type of disability or gender, an average of 62% of young adults who attend postsecondary education identify themselves as having a disability to someone at their place of postsecondary education.

Those who attend postsecondary education disclose their disability to:

- 23% a counselor/advisor
- 20% a disability specialist
- 19% their classroom teacher
- 29% no one

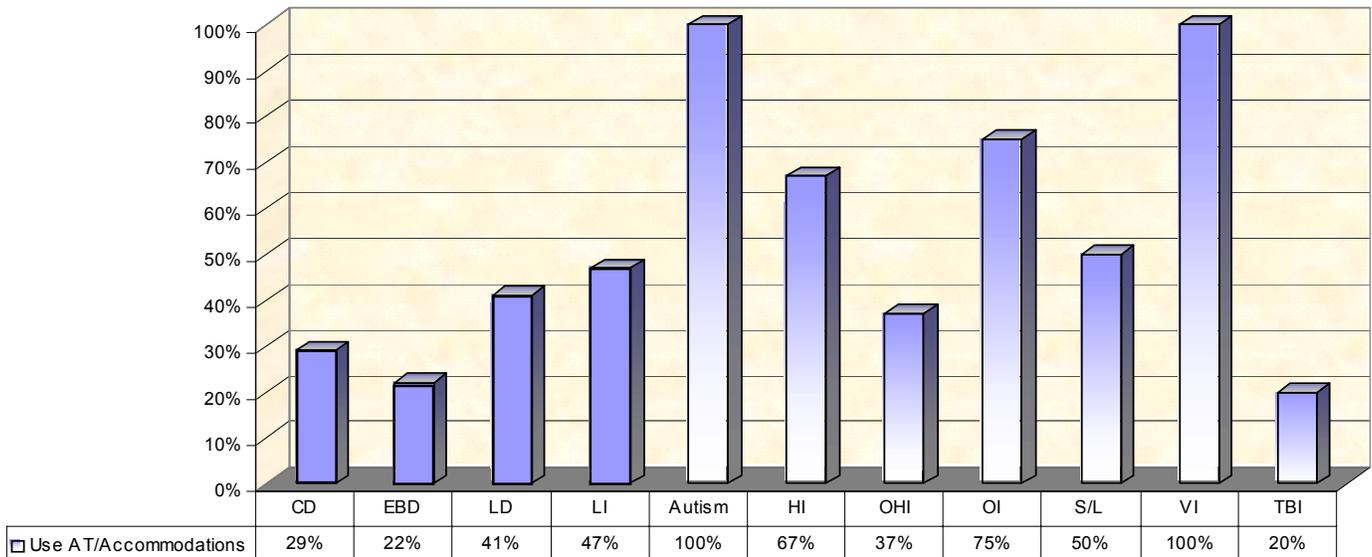
**Percentage Who Disclose Their Disability Status at the Place of Postsecondary Education by Gender, Ethnicity and Disability (n=345)**



## POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION & TRAINING - ACCOMMODATIONS & ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Of the 345 youth with disabilities participating in postsecondary education, 39% report using some type of accommodation or assistive technology (AT) device. Female youth (44%) are slightly more likely than male youth (37%) to use AT or accommodations. White youth (40%) are as likely to use AT and accommodations as minority youth (38%). Data in relation to students with specific types of low incidence disabilities should be interpreted cautiously as the numbers of each type of disability are small and can therefore vary widely given many individual factors.

Percentage Who Use AT/Accommodations at Their Place of Postsecondary Training by Gender, Ethnicity and Disability (n=345)



### Assistive Technology Utilized

- Software Programs:
  - Dragon Naturally Speaking, Dragon Dictate, Kurzweil, Spellcheckers, Scanning and reading programs, voice recorder/talking software
- Calculators
- Tests and books on tape / taped-texts
- Magnifier
- Laptop for Notetaking / Computer
- Computers with adaptive equipment

### Accommodations Provided

- Seating in front of the class
- Spelling help
- Extended time on tests and assignments
- Note takers/notetaking
- Quiet, separate room for tests
- Reader / test reader
- Writing or learning lab help
- Test with a teacher
- Tutoring / group work / study group
- Interpreter

### RESPONSES BY FORMER STUDENTS ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION OUTCOMES

Respondents were asked what, if any, problems or barriers they have had getting into or participating in postsecondary education or training. The following is a sampling of the responses:

- ❖ Lack of funds
- ❖ Bad reader/writer/lack of help with studies
- ❖ Pace of instruction is too fast
- ❖ Not an option because of disability (type or severity)
- ❖ Don't have information on colleges
- ❖ Agency red-tape and lack of funds

## EMPLOYMENT

Two outcomes of employment were considered: (1) whether the former student held competitive paid employment outside the home and (2) the compensation and benefits the youth received for their work. For this study, employment was identified as working for pay. Underemployment was identified as earning less than \$8.00 per hour and working less than 20 hours per week of paid employment.

## TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT

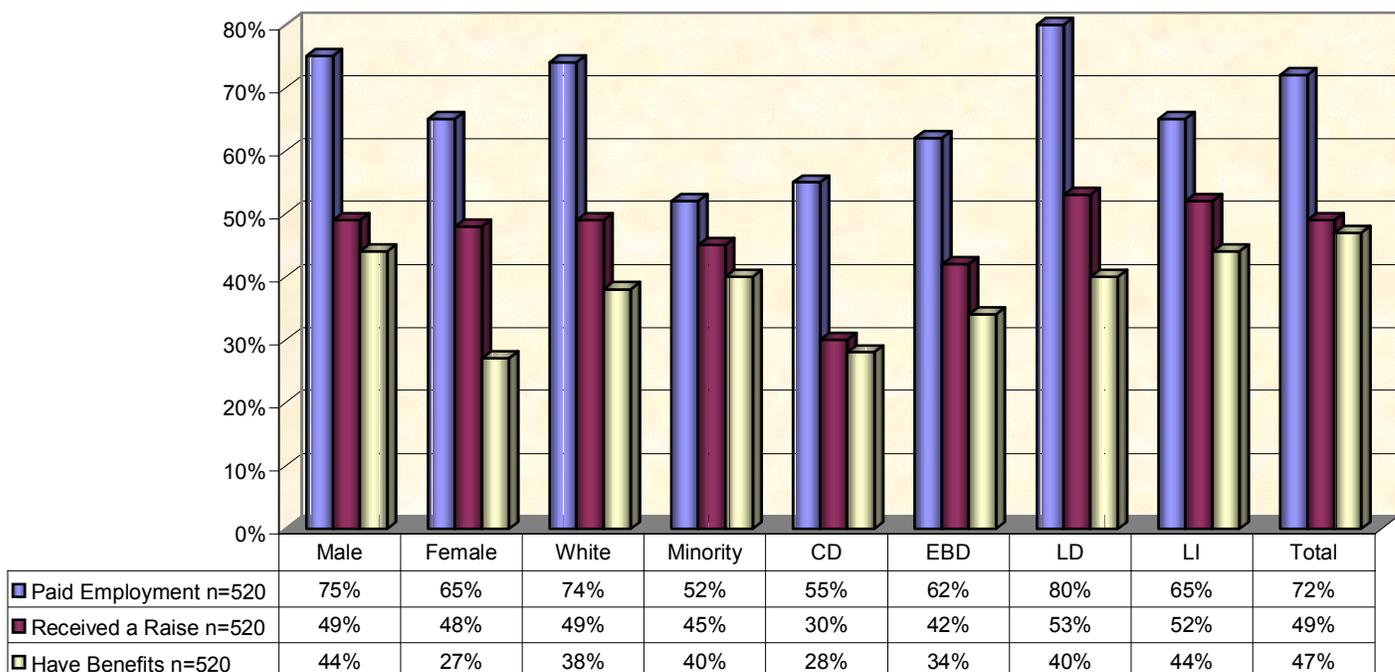
The following table indicates that of the 725 respondents, 72% report being employed for pay, with most youth with disabilities employed in food service, retail/sales and factory/production. A higher percentage of youth with disabilities are working this year than last year (69%), but still lower than in other survey years. On the national level, 70% of youth with disabilities had been competitively employed sometime when they had been out of high school for up to two years, which is an increase from 55% in 1987 (NLTS 2003), 44% were employed at the time of the interview.

**Primary Type of Post High School Employment (n=520)**

Primary Type of Employment	%	Primary Type of Employment	%
Agriculture/Farming	4	Computer/Office Equipment/Technology	.6
Construction	9	Food Service/Restaurant	20
Factory/Industry	16	Protective Services/Security	1
Retail/Sales/Marketing	15	Nursing/Medical/Health Care	4
Clerical/Office/Secretarial	4	Cosmetology/Barbering	.3
Mechanics/Repairer	8	Education	.6
Child Care/Cleaning/Janitorial	7	Supported or Sheltered Workshop	2
Management/Supervisory	1	Other	7
Logging/Fishing/Trapping	.6	Don't Know/Refused	0

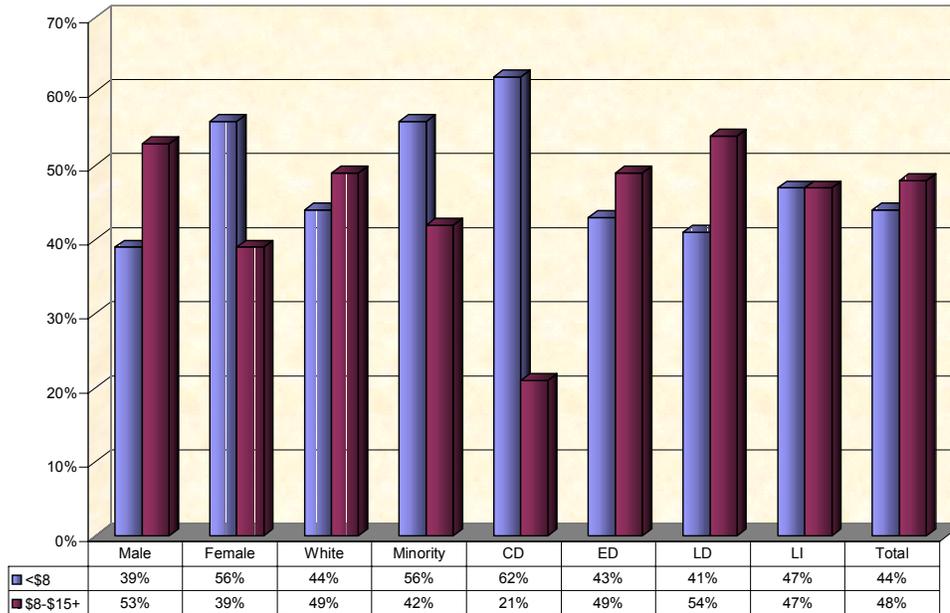
## EMPLOYMENT BY GENDER, ETHNICITY AND DISABILITY

Male youth and white youth are more likely to be employed and have received benefits than female youth, and are much more likely to be employed and have received benefits than minority youth. Youth with LD, EBD, and LI are more likely to be employed than youth with CD. Male youth, white youth and minority youth are as likely to have benefits through their current employment. Young female adults and those with CD are the least likely groups to receive benefits through their current employment.



**EMPLOYMENT BY GENDER, ETHNICITY AND DISABILITY**

**Rate of Pay by Gender, Ethnicity and Disability (n=520)**



A much higher percentage of males than females earn between \$8 and \$15. A slightly higher percentage of white young adults earn between \$8 and \$15 than do young minority adults. The most frequent rate of pay for all categories of gender, ethnicity, and disability is between \$8.00 and \$9.99 per hour. A higher percentage of youth with cognitive disabilities earn significantly lower salaries than any other disability area. Youth with hearing impairments, other health impairments, and speech and language impairments most frequently earn between \$8.00 and \$9.99 per hour.

Of the youth with disabilities who are currently employed, the majority (37%) have been employed more than one year, 26% have been working one to six months and 24% have been working seven to 12 months. A majority of youth (50%) work more than 37 hours per week, with 73% of the former students working 20 hours per week or more. 44% earn less than \$8.00 per hour; 71% earn up to \$10.00 per hour and 22% earn \$10.00 per hour or more.

**EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE**

**Of those employed:**

- 39% found their own jobs,
- 45% had help from family or friends
- 7% had assistance from an adult service agency

The greatest majority of youth with disabilities talked to family and friends about needed employment, while few talked to adult employment agencies. This indicates the importance family and friends have in guiding and advising youth with disabilities even after high school, and the need to better connect students with those agencies who can assist them in locating employment post high school.

**Employment Assistance (n=520)**

Assistance Finding Employment	% That Would Contact	% That Actually Talked To
Workforce center (e.g. Job Center, Workforce Investment Act) economic development, job service	17%	9%
Health and Family/Human Services	1%	1%
Past School Personnel	6%	5%
DVR	11%	9%
Family/friends	46%	48%
Other	13%	22%
Unknown/Refused	6%	6%

## REASONS FOR UNEMPLOYMENT

### Reasons Former Students are Unemployed (n=205)

Reasons for Unemployment	%
Unable to find work	56
Disabled and/or receiving SSI	12
Full-time student	10
Other	11
Laid off / Recently dismissed	5
Unknown / Refused	2
Homemaker	1
In a correctional institution, detention or residential facility	1
Not looking/volunteering	1
Unable to find transportation	1

28% of young adults with disabilities report that they are currently unemployed one year after exiting from high school.

The majority of youth with disabilities report they are not working because they are unable to find work. 12% report not working because they are receiving SSI benefits, which is 3% of all exiters.

## EMPLOYMENT AS PART OF TRANSITION PLAN AND HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

- 62% of former students report they had a paying job in the community when they graduated from high school
- 38% kept that job for more than one year after high school
- 68% of students had the primary intention in high school to begin full-time employment, rather than postsecondary training, following graduation
- 61% report being employed as planned and 50% are actually working more than 37 hours per week
- 61% of students had the primary intention of beginning postsecondary education after graduation
- 44% are attending postsecondary education as planned
- 78% report knowing where they were going to live after graduation

Students with emotional behavioral disabilities were the least likely to have the IEP transition goal of beginning employment rather than postsecondary or technical training after high school and have the lowest percentage of paid employment.

### RESPONSES BY FORMER STUDENTS ON EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Respondents were asked what, if any, problems or barriers they have had getting or keeping a job, or being employed as they would like since leaving high school. The following is a sampling of the responses:

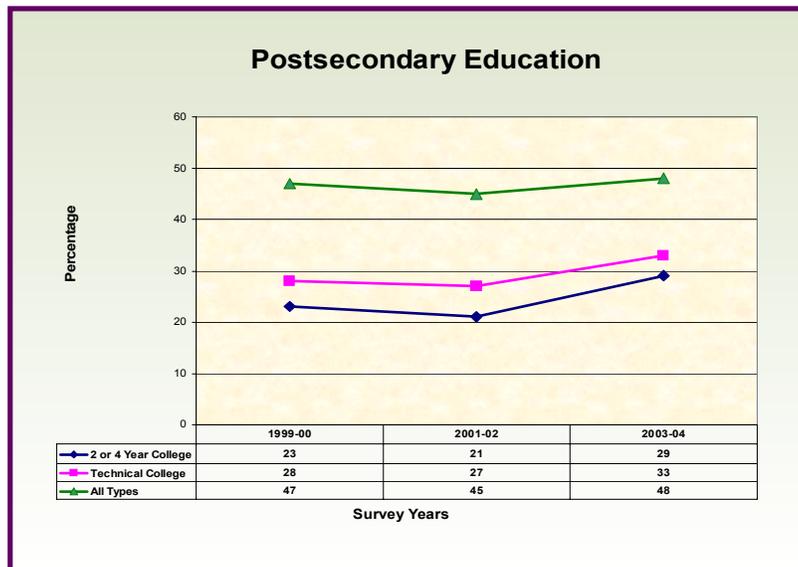
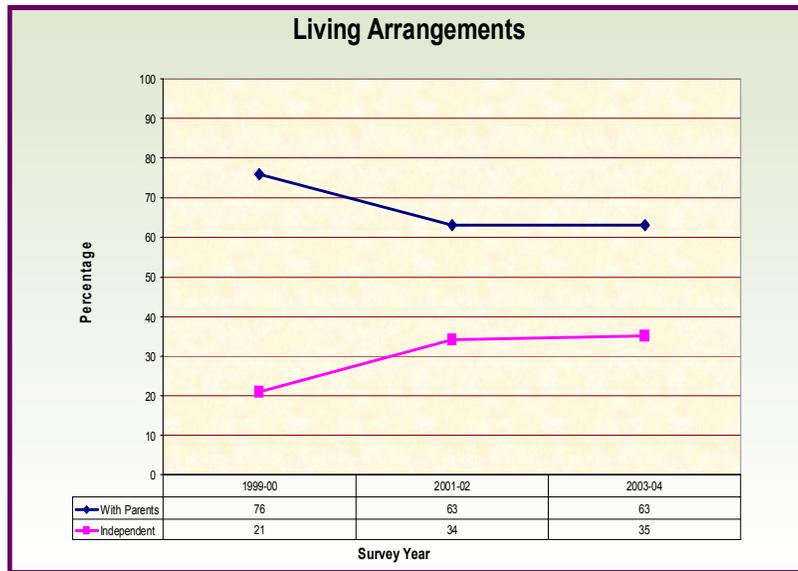
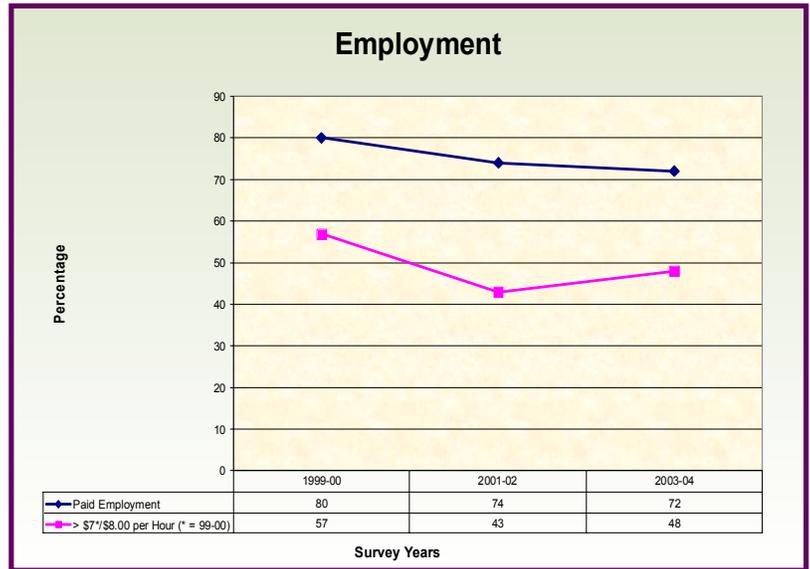
- ❖ Lack of transportation / reliable car
- ❖ Lack of job opportunities
- ❖ Poor reader / terrible speller
- ❖ Medical conditions / disability prevents working
- ❖ On DVR waiting list
- ❖ Getting along with others / ADD
- ❖ Get interviewed, but never hired / called back

### KEY IEP FINDINGS (2002-03 Exiters)

- 93% students attended their IEP meetings developed for their senior or last year of school.
- 75% of IEPs list preferences and interests when the student did not attend the IEP meeting
- 89% percent of the IEPs listed a course of study statement
- 37% indicate a need for involvement from an outside agency
- 29% of the IEPs invited a representative from an outside agency
- 73% of invited outside agencies attended the IEP meeting
- 33% of IEPs contained a statement of interagency responsibility or needed linkages

**RESULTS OVER TIME**

These tables review the major post high school outcomes for youth who exited high school during the 1999-2000, 2001-02, and 2003-04 school years, and were out of high school for one year. Independent living is defined as living with a spouse or roommate, another family member, alone, or in the military. Postsecondary education reflects the percentage of survey respondents who attended some type of postsecondary training. Paid employment is working for pay. A higher percentage of young adults with disabilities are living independently (fewer are living with their parent), more are attending all types of postsecondary training, and slightly fewer are employed.



### Possible Areas of Consideration When Reviewing These Data

- ❖ Since participation in postsecondary education is an avenue to higher paying jobs and increased benefits, districts may wish to investigate ways to increase student participation in a 2 year, 4 year, or technical college program.
- ❖ Since a high percentage of students do not disclose their disability status to any one at their place of postsecondary education, districts may wish to consider student self-advocacy and self-determination as an important part of transition instruction.
- ❖ Since few youth discuss needed employment options with the agencies that can assist them in finding jobs, districts may wish to familiarize students with these agencies as part of the student’s transition plan.
- ❖ Since statewide post high school outcomes are not as positive for minority youth and those with cognitive disabilities as for white youth and youth with other disabilities, districts may wish to review local outcomes in these areas.
- ❖ Local district may wish to conduct their own outcomes study utilizing the state website to determine local outcomes.

# WPHSOS

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### Acknowledgments

This survey and report was made possible by funding from IDEA grant #2005-9911-24. Its content may be reprinted in whole or part, with credit to WI DPI and CESA 11 acknowledged. However, reproduction of this report in whole or in part for resale is not authorized.

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## SUMMARY

This table reviews the major post high school outcomes for youth who exited high school during the 2003-04 school year. Independent living is defined as living with a spouse or roommate, another family member, alone, or in the military. Postsecondary education reflects the percentage of survey respondents who attended some type of postsecondary training. Paid employment is working for pay.

### View of Youth with Disabilities Who Have Paid Employment, Attend Postsecondary Education and Live Independently (n = 725)

03-04 Exiters	% Living Independently	% Attend Postsecondary	% Paid Employment
Male	32	47	75
Female	39	49	65
White	34	49	74
Minority	39	38	52
CD	30	15	55
EBD	34	38	62
LD	37	56	80
LI	44	56	65
Autism	12	25	50
HI	83	100	83
OHI	40	60	76
OI	27	36	27
S/L	38	38	81
TBI	25	62	38
VI	33	67	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>72</b>
NLTS2 (up to 2 years out)	23	32	70 / 44*

\* 70% over 2 years / 44 % at time of the interview

## LINKS TO RESOURCES

Wisconsin Executive Summaries/Final Reports

<http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/sped/posthigh.html>

Wisconsin State Improvement Plan

<http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/sped/sig.html>

LEA Special Education Plan

<http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/leareports/>

National Longitudinal Study

<http://www.sri.com>

National Longitudinal Study2

<http://www.nlts2.org>

National Longitudinal Study Literature Review

<http://www.sri.com/policy/cehs/dispolicy/nlts.html>

Wisconsin Statewide Transition Initiative

<http://www.wsti.org>



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